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Title : City developers don't need MoEF's approval

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State Authority Will Now Give Environment Clearances

Developers of big building projects will no longer have to go to New Delhi for environmental clearances (EC). In a notification issued late last month, the ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) has said all general conditions of the Environment Notification 2006 will not apply for all constructions above two lakh sq feet.

The general conditions of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification 2006 applied to areas classified as ecosensitive areas, critically polluted areas, inter-state boundaries and international boundaries.

Eco-sensitive areas are a buffer zone spread 10 km around national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and protected areas. For instance, the Sanjay Gandhi National Park is a protected area and on December 3, the MoEF issued a notification that all proposed projects within a 10 km radius of such areas will need the National Wildlife Board's nod. Sources said now even for the wildlife board's clearance, developers will not have to go to Delhi. Instead, project proposals have to be submitted to the State Environment Appraisal Committee-2 (SEAC-2) that scrutinises all projects in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. If it feels a clearance from the NWLB is necessary , it will forward the same to the Board. It will then be sent to the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority . The notification is a relief for projects in Dahisar, Borivli, Kandivli, Malad, Gore gaon, Bhandup, Mulund and Thane. The notification exempted schools, colleges, hostels for educational purposes and industrial sheds from seeking an EC even from the state authority .

However, the MoEF is yet to re-constitute SEAC-2. The previous committee's tenure ended in June. “In the absence of SEAC-2, all projects need to be submitted to the MoEF . So it will be sometime before the effects are seen here,“ sources said.

GREEN SIGNAL TO DEVELOPMENT

New Rule For Building Projects

➤ Under the MoEF notification of Dec 22, 2014, general conditions of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification 2006 will not apply to building constructions above **20,000 sq metres** and below **1.5 lakh sq metres**

➤ It will also not apply to townships and area development projects

➤ Now, proposals have to be submitted to the State Environment Appraisal

Committee-2, which will send it to the National Wildlife Board, if essential. The proposal will then go to the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority

➤ Schools, colleges and industrial sheds will not require environment nod even from state authorities if they implement environmentally sustainable liquid and solid management systems

Previous Rule

Earlier, all construction projects above **20,000 sq m** in eco-sensitive areas, critically polluted areas, inter-state boundaries and international borders, had to be submitted to the MoEF

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